

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~OCA
INCOMING

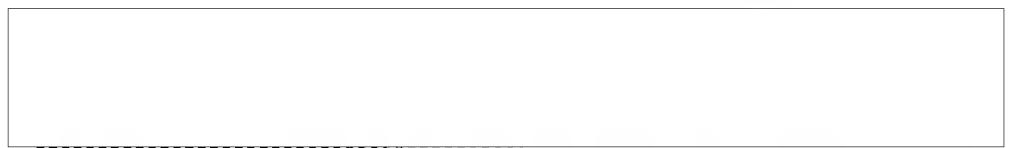
/ /

CONFIDENTIAL

FRP: , , 3, , , ,

STATE

25X1



86 9954583 SCR

PAGE 001
TOR: 190148Z FEB 86NC 9954583
PANAMA 02150

RR RUEAIIB
ZNY CCCCC ZOC STATE ZZH
STUOS95
RR RUEHC
DE RUEHZP #2150 0491707
ZNY CCCCC ZZH
R 181706Z FEB 86
FM AMEMBASSY PANAMA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7732
BT

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE PANAMA 02150

E.O. 12356: N/A

TAGS: PGOV, PM

SUBJECT: PANAMA'S PROTEST OVER ALLEGED STATEMENTS BY
- CONGRESSMAN LOWRY

REF: PANAMA 1898

1. I TOLD FONMIN ABADIA FEBRUARY 14 THAT HIS FEBRUARY 7 PROTEST NOTE (REFTEL) MADE AS MUCH SENSE AS STATE'S COMPLAINING TO PANAMANIAN AMBASSADOR BAZAN ABOUT STATEMENTS ATTRIBUTED AT TIMES TO OPPOSITION LEGISLATOR WILLI COCHEZ. I SAID I WAS SURE CONGRESSMAN LOWRY COULD BE EXPECTED TO GIVE CAREFUL CONSIDERATION TO PANAMA'S CRITIQUE OF PL. 96-70, BUT I SAW NOTHING TO BE GAINED BY PANAMA'S FORMALLY PROTESTING REMARKS ALLEGEDLY MADE BY THE INFLUENTIAL CHAIRMAN OF THE HOUSE SUBCOMMITTEE ON THE PANAMA CANAL, IN ANTICIPATION OF SUCH A REVIEW.

2. BESIDES, I SAID, WE WERE UNABLE TO ASCERTAIN THAT CONGRESSMAN LOWRY HAD IN FACT MADE THE ALLEGED STATEMENTS ABADIA HAD FOUND SO OBJECTIONABLE.

3. ABADIA FIRST MUMBLED IN SEMI-APOLOGY THAT THE PROTEST NOTE WAS "ONE OF THOSE THINGS WE HAVE TO DO," AND THEN (AS AN AFTERTHOUGHT) SUGGESTED IF LOWRY HAD BEEN MISQUOTED, THAT WE SET THE RECORD STRAIGHT IN OUR REPLY. I SUGGESTED IT MIGHT BE BETTER SIMPLY TO LET OUR LEGISLATORS PROCEED WITH THEIR STUDY OF PL. 96-70. HE DID NOT REPLY.

4. COMMENT: ABADIA'S REACTION FORTIFIES OUR BELIEF THAT HIS PROTEST NOTE MERITS NO FURTHER CONSIDERATION (OR REPLY) ON OUR PART. THE WAY THIS WAS HANDLED ALSO ARGUES FOR A NON-RESPONSE: WE FIRST LEARNED OF THE PROTEST NOTE VIA THE EVENING TV NEWS, ON FEBRUARY 7, I.E., BEFORE THE NOTE WAS SEEN AT THE EMBASSY.

BRIGGS

END OF MESSAGE

CONFIDENTIAL

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~